

ABSTRACT

Embedded writing or typing in a fax document or white board presentation are detected in a predetermined region of the document, recognized and converted into textual data corresponding to the fax telephone number or e-mail of the recipient of the document. The fax telephone number is automatically dialed without requiring the user to input the telephone number or even select a speed dial telephone number, although the use of confirmation of the scanned and textually converted fax telephone number or e-mail is within the principles of the present invention. In a first embodiment, the present invention adds the capability to a fax machine to scan the first page of the outgoing fax (e.g., the cover page) for detection and recognition (e.g., optical character recognition (OCR)) of the recipient's fax number and automatically dials it if found. Moreover, the sender's identification (e.g., telephone number and/or name) can also or alternatively be automatically scanned and determined to replace, add to, or otherwise overwrite the default header information programmed into the sending fax machine. In this way, the fax machine can automatically dial the sender's fax number, and/or imprint the customized header on the outgoing faxed pages with the sender's telephone number and/or name. A look-up table may be maintained to correlate specific names of individuals or businesses with specific fax telephone numbers or e-mail addresses. In another embodiment, a scanning white board allows a destination telephone number or e-mail address to be written in a predetermined area, and either periodically or upon demand the white board is scanned, and the image automatically faxed or e-mailed to the designated destination.